

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The University of Essex Students' Union recognises the enormous importance and value of volunteers. Student volunteers contribute their time, skills, and expertise without financial reward – so it's important to us that all VTeam voluntary activities are enjoyable and rewarding. As a volunteer, you always have the right to say no to any activity that you do not feel comfortable taking part in.

This agreement outlines what volunteers can expect from us, and what we expect from volunteers.

Our commitments to you

- To ensure that you can volunteer safely.
- To make you feel appreciated, welcome, and treated with respect.
- To give you the chance to gain new skills and experience.
- To give you clear points of contact for support and advice.
- To ensure you have clear instructions about what you are being asked to do.
- To ensure that every volunteer's opinion is welcomed and treated with respect, and that we listen to any feedback and take it seriously.
- To ensure volunteers have an accurate record of volunteering hours and activities on *Gradintel*. VTeam can provide evidence of your volunteering and references about your volunteering experience on request (subject to performance).

Your commitments to us

- To respect fellow volunteers.
- To respect SU staff, volunteering partners, and members of the public you come into contact with while volunteering.
- To avoid any actions that would bring VTeam and the Students' Union into disrepute.
- To be clear about what commitment you can give.
- To give us reasonable notice if you are unable to fulfil your commitment.
- To adhere to the [Volunteering Policy](#) and [Students' Union's policies](#).
- To inform VTeam staff or the Regular Project Leader of any problems and issues you may experience during your time as a volunteer, and to ask for help and guidance when you need it.

Support and Guidance

We are here to support you in whatever way we can. You can contact the Students Union Communities Department and talk to a member of our team during normal office hours - by email, or by visiting [SU reception on Square 4](#).

Email: vteam@essex.ac.uk

Health & Safety and Insurance

The SU will take all reasonable steps to ensure that volunteers are safe during any volunteering. In return, the SU expects volunteers to also take responsibility for the health

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and safety of themselves and those around them. Please refer to the Health and Safety section of the [SU Volunteering Policy](#) and read in full.

The SU automatically provides adequate insurance for any volunteering activity arranged through the SU.

Unspent Criminal Convictions

VTeam often works with and supports vulnerable groups. Volunteers must declare any unspent criminal convictions before taking part in any volunteering activity. Volunteers must also declare any new criminal convictions that come into effect at any point after signing the volunteering agreement, for as long as you are a registered University of Essex student. Failure to declare unspent criminal convictions could result in a permanent ban from all or any VTeam volunteering and even prosecution.

Any declarations should be sent to the Volunteering Manager: c.moore@essex.ac.uk

Get information and advice on declaring criminal convictions at unlock.org

Expenses

The SU covers all reasonable expenses associated with volunteering, including travel and project resources. It is vital that volunteers secure approval - in advance of making any purchases - from the Volunteering Manager, for any expenses they wish to claim. VTeam cannot pay expenses without prior agreement.

To claim expenses, volunteers must register for an ExpenseIn account by completing [this simple online form](#). Once completed, the SU Finance Team will set up your ExpenseIn account and should notify you when its set up. Expense claims can then be made [here](#).

Equality and Diversity

The SU strives to ensure that volunteers are treated fairly and without discrimination in accordance with our diversity and equality policy. We expect volunteers to treat everyone fairly - regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, race, ethnic or social/economic background. This includes behaviour towards the public and external partners as well as towards other volunteers.

Please refer to the Equality and Diversity section (7) of the [SU Membership Policy](#).

Problem Solving

If you have a problem with another volunteer or a partner organisation that you cannot solve, then you should contact the Volunteering Manager. If you have a complaint regarding a member of SU staff then you should follow the official [SU complaints procedure](#).

Photography and Video

VTeam may take photos and videos of volunteers during volunteering projects, sessions, or events. If you wish for your photo not to be taken please notify the relevant staff member during your session. Find information on withdrawing consent in the [SU Photography and Video Content Policy](#).